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A second Copper-Plate Grant of King Subandhu

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Until 1990 two inscriptions of King Subandhu of Māhiṣmatī¹ were known, one found in (?) cave II at Bagh, the other found south of Bagh in Barwani district. The “first Bagh plate” records the donation of a village to a Buddhist monastery, which had been founded by Dattaṭaka. The Barwani plate documents the donation of a field to a Brahman. Both are edited in the fourth volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* by Vasudev Vishnu Mirashi (1893-1985).²

A third inscription, also found at Bagh, is mentioned in *Indian Archaeology 1991-92. A Review* (published in 1996). A single sentence describes it as follows: “A copper-plate inscription in Gupta Brahmi character was found at Bagh Cave, which records the excavation of the cave during the reign of Subandhu of Mahishmati” (p. 116). Two excellent plates, one accompanying the report (plate LV A), the other in the catalogue “Rediscovering India” (plate 106)³ allow us to correct this wrong statement immediately. The inscription is a land grant for a Buddhist monastery founded by Ajitasena. The name of the monastery is not mentioned. There is no mention at all of the Bagh Caves.

In spite of the fact that King Subandhu and his relation to the Bagh caves have been discussed occasionally in recent years,⁴ this copper-plate is nowhere mentioned; it seems to have gone unnoticed and to have remained unedited. After an initial reading of the text on 25 July, 2005, I put the inscription aside, until my interest was revived by Peter Skilling (EFEO Bangkok), who in 2016 put his own excellent colored photograph at my disposal and also drew my attention to the catalogue mentioned above (figure 1).⁵

The inscription is written in 9 lines on a single side of a copper plate, which measures 26.1 cm by 11.1 cm and is 0.2 cm thick. On the whole, the inscription is well preserved.

¹ Māhiṣmatī is modern Maheśvar on the northern bank of the Narmadā: cf. J. Neuss, “Om̐kāra-Māndhātā. Tracing the Forgotten History of a Popular Place.” *BIS* 21 (2013), pp. 115–172, particularly p. 120.

² V.V. Mirashi: *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* Vol. IV, 1, Ootacamund, 1955, pp. 17–21, nos. 6 and 7.

³ *Rediscovering India: An Exhibition of Important Archaeological Finds: 1961–2011*, Delhi, 2012, p. 194, where the wrong description of the content is repeated verbatim.

⁴ The last to write on Subandhu at some length is probably W. Spink: *Ajanta: History and Development*, Volume 7, *Bagh, Dandin, Cells and Cell Doorways* (Handbuch der Orientalistik, Zweite Abteilung: Südasiens, Volume 18/7), Leiden, 2017, pp. 11–36, where our inscription is not mentioned. The narrative presented there goes far beyond the facts known from surviving sources.

⁵ According to information provided by P. Skilling and based on his interview on 23 March 2016 with D.S. Sood (Senior Conservation Assistant, Indore) and Mukut Bahadur, who found the inscription, the copper-plate grant was discovered on 5 May 1991 during the clearing of debris above (not in) cave II at Bagh. — It is my very pleasant obligation to thank P. Skilling for improving the English.

However, a very small but crucial part at the end is damaged with the result that the date is lost.

The text is easily understood in spite of a few mistakes committed by the engraver. At the very beginning he should have written *vaṭapadrān*=*mahā-*^o rather than *vaṭapadrām* = *mahā-*^o, which is incorrect. The *-ā-* in the ending of *prativāsinās*, line 2, is a mistake for *prativāsinaś*. An *anusvāra* seems to be missing in the name *vidhyadeva*, line 3, for *Viṃdhyadeva*. In the same line, the reading *guśūra* is more likely than *bhuśūra*, when one compares the character *bhu* in *paribhuktaka* which occurs twice in the same line, and the character *ga* in *bhagavataś ca*, line 5.

The engraver executed *atisṛṣya* instead of *atisṛṣṭha* at the end of line 7, where again an *anusvāra* is missing. It is at first not entirely certain, whether or not *sr* or *sra* is intended by the engraver, because both characters are very similar. However, after a close comparison of the subscript *-r-* in *°kṣetraṃ*, line 3 (twice), or in *°kartre*, line 5, we find two distinctive characteristics (figures 2–4). A subscript *-r-* is connected to the respective *akṣara* by a straight vertical stroke with a slightly curled end. In contrast, in the subscript *-r-* the curl is missing and the vertical stroke is slightly wavy. This can be seen clearly only after enlarging the image. Although the curl is hardly indicated in *atisṛṣya*, the stroke is clearly vertical, and the interpretation as *-r-* can be considered as fairly certain.⁶ This cannot be said of two dots at the very edge of the copper-plate at the end of the same line, which are clearly visible only after enlarging the color photograph, which might be interpreted as a marker of the end of the sentence.

The part of the superscript *-ai* in *atraivā-*^o, line 4 that branches off to the right, is barely indicated. Similarly, in *mātāpitrār*, line 7, for *mātāpitrar*, the left part of the superscript *-o* is forgotten. An *anusvāra* is missing again at the end of *°bheṣajyārtha[m]*, line 7. Again in line 7, the problem of how to interpret the character *vra/vr* arises again in *punyābhiv(r)ddhaye*.

Finally, the name of the king is written vertically on the left side of the text as on the first Bagh plate: *śrī Subandhoḥ* “of Śrī Subandhu.”

1. svasti vaṭapadrām=mahārāja **Subandhuḥ** kuśalī valguvaiṣayika-śaṅkarapathakīya-yakṣa-dāsānake
2. svān=pattalaka-dānasādhakadūta-cāṭa-bhaṭa-kāṣṭhikādīn=prativāsinās=ca samājñāpayati
3. viditam astu vo yad atra vi[m]dhyadevapariḥbhuktakakṣetraṃ (gu)śūrapariḥbhuktakakṣetraṃ vihari-pāṭakah
4. āramadvayaṃ kūpadvayaṃ ca tan=mayācandrārkkārṇṇavakālīnam=a(trai)vājitasena-kāritakavihā
5. rasya sphuṭita-khaṇḍa-śīrṇṇa-saṃskāraṇāya bhagavataś ca jagaddhitakartre mahākāruṇikāya
6. buddhāya gandha-dhūpa-dīpa-tailādihetor āryyasa[m]ghāya ca caivarika-piṇḍapāta-

⁶ It is important for historical linguistics to decide whether *-ra-* or *-r-* is written, because *-r-* was also pronounced as *-ra-* besides (more frequently) *-ri-*; cf. J. Wackernagel: *Altindische Grammatik, Band I, Lautlehre*, Göttingen, 1896, § 28 with A. Debrunner: *Nachträge zu Band I*, Göttingen, 1957, p. 19 on 31,14; J. Bloch, “La prononciation de R en sanskrit”, 1951, in: *Recueil d’articles de Jules Bloch 1906–1955: Textes rassemblés par C. Caillat*, Publications de l’Institut de Civilisation Indienne, Série in-8°, Fasc. 52, Paris, 1985, pp. 401–403; O. v. Hinüber, *Kleine Schriften*, Wiesbaden, 2009, p. 576, “Linguistic Experiments,” in: P. Olivelle et alii (eds.): *Re-imagining Aśoka*, Delhi, 2012, p. 202, note 9 and *ARIRIAB XIII* (2010), p. 5, note 8; *brahaspati*, *ARIRIAB XVIII* (2015), p. 70; further: *prṛṣṭo* < *prahrṣṭo*, L. Sander & E. Waldschmidt: *Sanskrit-handschriften aus den Turfanfunden Teil IV*, Wiesbaden, 1980, p. 237.

śayanāsana

7. glānapratyaya-bheṣajyārttha[m] mātāpitrār=ātmanaś ca puṇyābhiv(ṛ)ddhaye āgrahārikam=atis(r)sya(h)

8. yato smadīyair anyaviṣayapatibhiś cātra vyāpāro na kāryya (symbol) pratihāra
Śāṅkara dūtaka

9. saṃ + (tsa)ra āśa(ḍh)a su di 2

“Hail! From Vaṭapadra.⁷ Mahārāja Subandhu, who is in good health, instructs his Pattalakas, his messengers who ensure the execution of a donation, his police officers, constables, and policemen armed with wooden sticks, etc., and the residents (*prativāsin*) in Yakṣadāsānaka, which belongs to the Śāṅkara subdivision (*pathaka*), in the Valgu district: Be informed that: Here are the field used by Vindhyadeva, the field used by Guṣūra, the hamlet named Vihari, two parks and two wells. This has been given away by me as an *āgrahārika* (donation) for time as long as moon, sun and ocean endure, for the purpose of repairing what is cracked, broken and worn out in the monastery founded by Ajitasena exactly here (i.e. in Yakṣadāsānaka): (given) to the greatly compassionate Lord, the Buddha, who brings benefit to the world, for (veneration with) fragrance, incense, lamps, and oil and to the noble community (of monks) for clothing, food, living quarters and medicine for the sick, and for the increase of merit for my parents and for myself: whence our own (officers) and other district governors must not interfere here. The messenger is the Pratihāra Śāṅkara. Year (lost) Āśa(ḍh)a, bright day 2.”

At the beginning King Subandhu addresses five classes of his officials, the *pattalakas*, *dānasādhakadūtas*, *cāṭas*, *bhaṭas*, *kāṣṭhikas*, and unnamed others whose office requires them to be informed of his donation. This group is much smaller than that of the grant to the monastery built by Dattaṭaka, in which seven groups are mentioned⁸ — which, compared to other copper-plate grants, is still a fairly low number.

The first group called *pattalaka* refers to a class of officials whose function remains unknown. They are most likely “**not** an officer in charge of a territorial unit called *pattalā*” as stated by D.C. Sircar.⁹ Sircar’s statement might have been influenced by the wording in the Sarnath inscription of Queen Kumāradevī,¹⁰ which mentions a certain lady Jambukī (*sā*

⁷ The probably frequent place name *vaṭapadraka* “Banyan village” occurs again in the Banswara plates of King Bhoja (11th century): *sthalī-maṇḍale ghāghradora-bhogāntahpāti-vaṭapadrake*, *EI* 11. 1911-12, p. 182, line 8.

⁸ As usual, *āyuktaka*, “appointed, posted”, and *vinīyuktaka*, “delegated”, are erroneously taken by V.V. Mirashi (and many others) to mean classes of officials. On these two words see O. v. Hinüber: Review of F. Virkus: *Politische Strukturen im Gupta-Reich (300–550 n. Chr.)*, Asien- und Afrika-Studien der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Band 18, Wiesbaden 2004 in *IJ* 50 (2007), pp. 183–192, particularly p. 188. This agrees well with the usage in legal literature, where *niyukta* denotes somebody delegated to represent and plead for a party in a law suit: L. Rocher, “The Terms Niyukta, Aniyukta, and Niyoga in Sanskrit Legal Literature,” in: L. Rocher: *Studies in Hindu Law and Dharmaśāstra*, ed. by D.R. Davis, London, 2012 [rev.: A. Michaels, *JAOS* 113 (2013), pp. 363f.], pp. 603–612 (the original date of Rocher’s article[s] is unfortunately not given in his collected papers).

⁹ There is some confusion, though, because in contrast to this explanation in his *Epigraphical Glossary* s.v. *pattalaka*, in his *Indian Epigraphy* Sircar writes “the *Pattalaka* the officer in charge of a territorial unit called *Pattalā*,” p. 360, which seems to be an error.

¹⁰ The inscription was edited by S. Konow: “Sarnath Inscription of Kumāradevī,” *EI* 9 (1907–08), pp. 319–328 and again by D.C. Sircar: *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Volume II: *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century A.D.*, Delhi, 1983, no. 20, pp. 293–298 and in T.P. Verma and A.K. Singh: *Inscriptions of the Gāḍavālas and Their Times*, Vol. I, Study, and Vol. II, Text, Delhi 2011 (edition in vol. II, pp. 645–648, cf. vol. I, p. 366). Only S. Konow points out the considerable difficulties in understanding verses 22 foll. of the inscription; in contrast, it is impossible to benefit from D.C. Sircar and T.P. Verma and A.K. Singh, who simply gloss over all problems. The crucial verses may be translated as follows, keeping as far as possible to the original word order: “Having prepared this excellent copper(-plate) charter (*tāmraśāsana*) in

jambukī, “this Jambukī”) with the rank “foremost of all *pattalikās*” (*sakala-pattalikā-grabhūtā*, p. 325, line 25, verse 22).¹¹ Obviously there were many *pattalikās*; Jambukī was their chief or leader, and it was her or their task, it seems, to prepare copper-plates, in this case perhaps the one recording the donation (*tat-tāmraśāsanavara[m]*). It makes sense that an official charged with preparing a copper-plate (interestingly, in Kumāradevī’s case, a lady or rather several ladies) is mentioned here, when we take into consideration the next class of official listed in our inscription. The term *dānasādhakadūta*, which seems to appear here for the first time, is clear in itself. The person conveying the text to all concerned is named after the issuing official called *pattalaka*.

The next two groups of officials are regularly named *cāṭa* and *bhaṭa*, in this sequence. Despite their frequent occurrence, the exact meaning of the two terms is unclear, and the present inscription might shed a little light on them. Following G. Bühler and J.F. Fleet, it is usually assumed that both words refer to some sort of policemen and soldiers.¹² This was doubted by J. Ph. Vogel,¹³ who draws the attention to the modern term *cār* still in use at the time in Cameālī, the West Pahārī dialect spoken at Cambā, but not found in inscriptions, which is derived from *cāṭa* and means “head of a *pargaṇā*.” Vogel also points out that the same meaning is assumed by Pṛthivīdhara in his commentary of uncertain date to Mṛcchakaṭika act V (prose between verses 7 and 8) in an enumeration of persons from whom it is hardly possible to escape... *kāyattho bhikkhu cāṭo* (read *cāḍo* rather?) ... , when he explains this as *cāṭaḥ kṣudraṇiṣayabhoktā*.¹⁴ This concurs with Vogel’s idea: in the light of the modern evidence he pleads for a translation of *cāṭa-bhaṭa* as “an official subordinate to the head of the *pargaṇā*” also in ancient documents. As J.F. Fleet already pointed out, however, the compound should be a *dvandva* and not a *tatpuruṣa*. Moreover, following this and the other rather few occurrences of *cāṭa* in literary texts recorded in our dictionaries, e.g., in the Yājñavalkyasmṛiti *cāṭa-taskara-*° ... °-*ādibhiḥ* ... *kāyasthaiś ca viśeṣataḥ*, I 336, again in an enumeration of unpleasant persons against which the king must protect his subjects, it is

accordance with the teachings of the Śrīdharmacakrajina (i.e. the Buddha: *jinaśāsana*), this Jambukī, the foremost of the *Pattalikās*, and having handed it over to her (Queen Kumāradevī), by her (the Queen) — (may she last) as long as moon and sun are on earth — this Śrīdharmacakrajina was made exactly as it was at the time of King Dharmāśoka by preserving his (the Buddha’s) way (of appearance), but it was made still more wonderful. With effort this monastery was made by her (Queen Kumāradevī) for this Sthavira (identity unclear), and it was handed over to him (the Sthavira) alone that he may live there (as long as) moon and sun are there.”

¹¹ The compound *sakala-pattalikā-grabhūtā* does not mean, as S. Konow translated it, “who was made (?) the foremost of all *pattalikās* by her (Kumāradevī)” but “who was the foremost ...”

¹² This guess by G. Bühler, *IA* 5 (1876), p. 115, note ‡ (“I now translate the word *chāṭa* by ‘irregular soldiers’” without further comment) is most likely based on the established meaning “soldier, mercenary” for *bhaṭa*. The reasoning is that if *bhaṭa* means “soldier”, *cāṭa* probably means something similar, cf. J.F. Fleet: *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* III, Calcutta, 1888 (repr. Benares 1970 with notes and bibliography of Gupta Inscriptions by A.K. Narain), p. 98, note 2. P.V. Kane: *History of Dharmasāstra*, Vol. III, Poona ²1973, pp. 983 foll., gives a survey of research on the two words.

¹³ J.Ph. Vogel, “Errors in Sanskrit Dictionaries,” *BSOAS* 20 (1957), pp. 561–567, particularly p. 566, cf. J.Ph. Vogel: *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, *Inscriptions of the Pre-Muhammadan Period*, ASI New Imperial Series XXXVI, Calcutta 1911, pp. 130ff., which contains a highly important discussion of various titles of officials. Vogel’s article escaped the attention of D.C. Sircar: *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Delhi, 1966, s.v. *bhaṭa*, and particularly in the long but inconclusive discussion s.v. *cāṭa*.

¹⁴ Vogel erroneously attributes this explanation to “a gloss from an early Calcutta edition.” However, the only old edition published in Calcutta in 1829 has only a *chāyā*, but no gloss. The explanation is, however, also found in the early 19th century Mṛcchakaṭika commentary by Lalla Dīkshita published together with the text of the play by N.B. Godabole in the Bombay Sanskrit Series as no. LII, Bombay, 1896.

assumed that *cāṭa* means “deceiver” or the like, which makes sense, while the very specialized modern meaning “head of a *pargaṇā*” nowhere does.

In Subandhu’s copper-plate grants both titles occur in a new combination with *kāṣṭhika* added after *cāṭabhaṭa*. This, at first, poses a new problem. If “bearer of wood”, the standard dictionary meaning of *kāṣṭhika*, is proposed, it does not make much sense in this enumeration together with and after “police (*cāṭa*) and constables (*bhāṭa*).” At first an error might be suspected, perhaps for *goṣṭhika*, “member of a corporation,” when °*cāṭa-bhaṭa-(go)ṣṭhika-°* in the first Bagh plate of Subandhu is compared. However, *(go)ṣṭhika* turns out to be only a suggestion made by V.V. Mirashi.¹⁵ It cannot be verified from the accompanying plate, where only very faint traces of the character *ṣṭha* are visible, while the first syllable is almost completely rubbed off. Therefore, it is not unlikely that *kāṣṭhika* should be reconstructed instead of *goṣṭhika* in the first Bagh plate as well. A meaning of *kāṣṭhika* that suits this context can be found in Śyāmilaka’s Pādatāḍitaka: *kaṣṭhakamahattarair api vidhṛto’smi ciram mṛgayamānaiḥ*, verse 80b (vol. I, p. 108, cf. p. 248) “the court-attendants chased me and detained me for a long time” (G. H. Schokker, II p. 27).¹⁶ The meaning “policeman armed with a wooden stick” not only fits the context of the inscriptions perfectly after *cāṭa* and *bhaṭa*, it is, moreover, perhaps the earliest reference to a weapon (Hindī *lāṭhī*) that is used by policemen in India to this very day. Lastly, the inscription and the Pādatāḍitaka are in all likelihood contemporaneous, because both are dated to the 5th century and thus support each other.¹⁷

Consequently, all that can be safely said about these three terms is that they refer to enforcement personnel and thus designate policemen of different ranks and tasks with the *kāṣṭhika*, who according to the Pādatāḍitaka executes orders when he is actually pursuing persons, clearly standing at the lower end.

Therefore, J. Ph. Vogel is obviously on the wrong track with his idea about *cāṭa-bhaṭa*. The same is partly true for the dictionaries if “deceiver” or the like is given as the only meaning of *cāṭa*.¹⁸ For, this hinges on the explanations of relatively late commentators, who probably were no longer acquainted with the original meaning “policeman” preserved in epigraphic Sanskrit. If *cāṭa* occurs in literary texts, it most probably refers originally to (corrupt) policemen. The interpretation “policeman” is supported by the reference to the second class of officials, to scribes (*kāyastha*) who are mentioned together with them as a second category of unpleasant people.¹⁹ As a result a development of the meaning of *cāṭa* beginning with “policeman” used in inscriptions as well as in contexts with a negative connotation in older literary texts such as the Mṛcchakaṭika or the Yājñavalkyasmṛti and leading to “deceiver” in the mind of commentators can be traced. The latter negative meaning

¹⁵ V.V. Mirashi refers to his edition of the “Kaman stone inscription,” *EI* 24 (1937–38), pp. 329–336, where *goṣṭhika*, “member of the managing committee,” occurs in lines 12, 23 and 24. This badly preserved inscription, dated to the 10th century, was found in North India not far from Mathurā.

¹⁶ G.H. Schokker: *The Pādatāḍitaka of Śyāmilaka*, 2 vols, Dordrecht, 1966, 1976 [rev.: W. Rau, *Oriens* 20 (1968–69), pp. 572 foll.; S. Levitt, *JAOS* 90 (1970), pp. 594 foll.; B. Stoler Miller, *JAOS* 97 (1977), pp. 375 foll.; K. de Vreese, *JRAS* 1978, pp. 182 foll.; L.A. Schwarzschild, *IJ* 20 (1978), pp. 278–280; O. v. Hinüber, *ZDMG* 128 (1978), p. 215; M. Kraatz, *OLZ* 77 (1982), columns 186–188].

¹⁷ This observation supports G.H. Schokker’s dating of the Pādatāḍitaka, Vol. I, pp. 31 foll.

¹⁸ So also Hemacandra: *Deśināmāṇī*, ed. R. Pischel, Bombay Sanskrit Series, no. 17, Bombay 1938, *cāḍo māyāvī*, III 8.

¹⁹ The dubious reputation of scribes is mirrored in the verse *yamo pi vañcito yena gakārāntaralekhakam / kalamam āyudham yasya tasya devo pi śaṅkate*, Kṣemendra: *Lokaprakāśa*.

is perhaps supported by the only trace of *cāṭa* in modern languages (besides *cār*) in Pashai *čārā* “stupid, mad.”²⁰ Our dictionaries should be adjusted accordingly.

The last group to be informed is the *prativāsins*.²¹ These are the residents of Yakṣa-dāsānaka, in the subdivision (*pathaka*) Śāṅkara and the district Valgu.²² These places are not identified, but they are most probably in the vicinity of Bagh. The formation of the name of the village Yakṣadās-ānaka with the suffix *-ānaka*²³ follows a pattern known from place names in the inscriptions from the Bagh hoard: Kukkuṭ-ānaka, Garjj-ānaka, Jayasen-ānaka, Daman-ānaka, Droṇadantik-ānaka, Dharm-ānaka, Nāgaravarddh-ānaka, Piñchik-ānaka,²⁴ and Susah-ānaka. It is remarkable that all these formations can be easily explained from Indo-Aryan vocabulary in contrast to other names of villages such as Bheṭuṅkalikā. It is an open question whether or not this points to villages founded comparatively later. So far, this type of place name seems to be limited to the wider Bagh area.

The objects donated encompass two fields, which were at the time of the donation used by or in the possession of two persons, Vindhyadeva²⁵ and Guśūra. This is expressed by the term *paribhuktaka*, which is also used in the Barwani plate of Subandhu, where the *sāti-paribhuktaka-kṣetra* is donated to the Brahman Śaṣṭhisvāmin. In documents of other rulers different terms of probably the same meaning are used in this connection. Wordings like *āryadāsa-kumbhakāra-pratyaya-kṣetrapadam* “the field attached to the potter Āryadāsa” (Rudradāsa, appendix no. IV, line 4, p. 67) are found in the grants of the Bagh hoard or in Maitraka donations, if fields are donated to Brahmins.²⁶ In all these cases, it seems, it was not the property right of the fields that was transferred to the monasteries (or to the Brahmins), but the revenue from these fields, as already observed by J. Jolly.²⁷

²⁰ R.L. Turner: *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*, London, 1966, no. 4735 *cāṭa*-, where *cār* is not listed — It is impossible to find out at which point *cāṭa-bhaṭa* ceased to be mentioned in inscriptions.

²¹ The meaning “resident” for *prativāsin* is not registered in our dictionaries, which list “neighbor” only. Other inscriptions show that it was used also as a more general term, cf., e.g., the grant year 102 of Bhaṭṭāraka which is published in K.V. Ramesh & S.P. Tewari: *A Copper-plate Hoard of the Gupta Period from Bagh, Madhya Pradesh*, Delhi, 1990, p. 52, no. XXIV, line 3 (p. 56, no. XXVI, line 3): *aśvaśatīpathake susahan[ā]nake samupāgatān svān āyuktakān grāmaprativāsinaś ca bodhayati* “he alerts his employees, who assembled in Susahānaka in the subdivision (*pathaka*) Aśvaśatī and the residents of the village;” cf. also *sarvvān [e]va-ikṣaraky-āhārāntargata-purohitapallikā-prativāsino* “all the residents of Purohitapallikā included in the subdivision (*āhāra*) Ikṣarakī,” Surat Plates of the Traikūṭa ruler Vyāghrasena, year 241, line 8, CII IV,1, p. 27, and °*āyām prativāsi-kuṭumbinas*, CII III, p. 193, line 4 foll., and p. 198, line 5.

²² Territorial divisions are discussed by V.V. Mirashi, as note 2 above, pp. CXXXIV foll. and by D.C. Sircar: *Indian Epigraphy*, p. 379.

²³ The relevant place names found in the Bagh hoard are listed by K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari (as in note 21 above), pp. XIX–XXI. Their explanation of the suffix as Skt. *ānaka* “drum” can be safely forgotten. The only example for the suffix *-ānaka* in a place name recorded in J. Wackernagel: *Altindische Grammatik* Band II, 2: A. Derunner: *Die Nominalsuffixe*, Göttingen, 1954, p. 278, § 163 is *āryānaka*, *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*. The suffix is not listed in T.R. Sharma: *Personal and Geographical Names in Gupta Inscriptions*, Delhi, 1978, pp. 209–292 “Place-names and their suffixes.”

²⁴ The form *piñchika* confirms the rare reading *kapāla-sikhipiñchābhyām*, Budhasvāmin: *Bṛhatkathāśloka-saṃgraha*, ed. F. Lacôte, XIX 3, cf. M. Mayrhofer: *Kurzgefaßtes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. Band III, Heidelberg, 1976, p. 757.

²⁵ Three names beginning with Vindhya-° are listed by J. A. van Velze: *Names of Persons in Early Sanskrit Literature*. PhD Thesis, Utrecht, 1938, p. 106.

²⁶ K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari, as note 21 above; material from Maitraka donations is collected in M. Njammasch: *Bauern, Buddhisten und Brahmanen. Das frühe Mittelalter in Gujarat, Asien- und Afrika-Studien der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, Band 2, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2001 [rev.: O. v. Hinüber, *IJ* 47. 2004, pp. 308–320], p. 57–59.

²⁷ J. Jolly: *Recht und Sitte. Grundriß der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde*, II. Band, Heft 8,

The name of the owner of the second field is Guśūra. This word has been discussed more than once. First, H. Lüders drew attention to this word occurring in manuscripts from Qyzil, which he took as a title of unknown, but likely Iranian, derivation. Then H.W. Bailey, following T. Burrow, wanted to connect it to Avestan *vīsō.puθra*; this has been accepted by N. Sims-Williams, who lists *guśūra* among eastern Iranian loan words in various Indian languages.²⁸ In the meantime, the word *guśūra* appeared in the Senavarma inscription and as *gasūra* in a Brāhmī inscription from Gandhāra.²⁹ In both cases it is again used as a title. However, inscriptions from the Upper Indus *guśuraspālasya*, Thor 235:41 (p. 257) “of Guśuraspāla” and *vicarati guśu + ///*, Gukona 9:1 (p. 121) “Guśu[wanders]” show that *guśūra* can also be part of a name,³⁰ because Guśuraspāla “Guśura-sena” which can be compared to the hybrid Indo-Iranian names Yaśaspāla “Yaśa-sena” or Śīlaspāla “Śīla-sena” hardly contains a title. Therefore, Guśūra in *guśūra-paribhuktaka* should also be taken as a name as in the partly destroyed inscription Guśu[in Gukona.³¹

In addition to the fields a *pāṭaka* called Vihari, two parks or gardens (*ārāma*) and two wells (*kūpa*) were included in the gift. Probably, part of a village, possibly even Yakṣa-dāsānaka, is meant by the term *pāṭaka*.³²

The purpose of the donation is threefold. The first is for repairs of the Buddhist monastery founded by Ajitasena situated exactly here (*atra-eva*, line 4), that is, in Yakṣa-dāsānaka. Here the name of the monastery is not given, in contrast to the first Bagh plate, where both the name of the monastery and of the founder are given as *dattaṭaka-kāritaka-lāyana-vihāra* “Lāyana-vihāra established by Dattaṭaka,” while nothing is said about its location. The wording used for repairs *sphuṭita-khaṇḍa-śīrṇa-saṃskāraṇāya* adds yet another variant to this formula.³³ Secondly, the donation is made to provide the means for the

Straßburg, 1896, p. 105 “Ausser Land, insbesondere Feldern, Häusern oder ganzen Dörfern, worunter jedoch nur das Recht auf den Steuerertrag aus denselben zu verstehen ist, werden auch ... verschenkt,” cf. also J. Duncan M. Derrett, “An Indian Contribution to the Study of Property,” *BSOAS* 18 (1956), pp. 475–498 = *Essays in Classical and Modern Hindu Law*, Vol. I, *Dharmaśāstra and Related Texts*, Leiden, 1976 [rev.: L. Rocher, *JAOS* 97, 1977, pp. 367 foll.; J. C. Wright, *BSOAS* 40 (1977), p. 221; O. v. Hinüber, *ZDMG* 127 (1977), p. 465; L. Sternbach, *JRAS* 1978, pp. 190–192], pp. 333–357, particularly p. 342 (= p. 484).

²⁸ H. Lüders, “Zur Geschichte und Geographie Ostturkestans,” 1922, in: *Philologica Indica*, Göttingen, 1940, pp. 526–546, particularly pp. 544–546 with additions pp. 788 foll.; H.W. Bailey: *Dictionary of Khotanese Saka*, Cambridge, 1976, s.v. *bāsivārai* with references to his earlier discussions; N. Sims-Williams, “Eastern Middle Iranian,” in: R. Schmitt (ed.): *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum*, Wiesbaden 1989, pp. 165–172, particularly p. 166, no. 3.2.0.2.4.

²⁹ O. v. Hinüber: *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Senavarma-Inschrift*, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz, Abhandlungen der geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jg 2003, Nr. 1, p. 29, § 9b and H. Falk, “Six Early Brāhmī Inscriptions from Gandhāra,” *AION* 64, 2004, pp. 139–155, particularly pp. 148–150, reprinted in *Hariśyenalekhapañcāśikā. Fifty Selected Papers on Indian Epigraphy and Chronology*, Bremen, 2013, pp. 352–373, particularly pp. 361–363, cf. also *ARIRIAB* XX (2017), p. 137, note 46.

³⁰ D. Bandini-König: *Die Felsbildstation Thalpan VI*. Materialien zur Archäologie der Nordgebiete Pakistans, Band 11, Darmstadt, 2013. The hybrid names are discussed in the commentary on Thor 15:1 (p. 239); on names ending in *-spāla*, cf. also *ARIRIAB* XX (2017), p. 137 and R. Schmitt, *Kratylos* 47 (2002), p. 159.

³¹ A merchant from Ujjain named Khamgghuśūra is mentioned in a document found at Sañjeli (Gujarat) issued during the reign of Toramāṇa to establish a foundation (*akṣayanī[vī]*), *EI* 40 (1973–74) [1986], p. 181, line 11. The relation between Guśūra and this structurally similar name, if any, is unclear.

³² I. Strauch: *Die Lekhapaddhati-lekhapañcāśikā. Briefe und Urkunden im mittelalterlichen Gujarat* (Monographien zur indischen Archäologie, Kunst und Philologie, Band 16), Berlin, 2002, p. 466 s.v.

³³ The first Bagh plate has *gandha-dhūpa-mālya-bali-sattra-upayojya*, although *bali* and *sattra* belong rather to a Brahmin context: cf., e.g., *vali-caru-sattra-upayogārtha* in the Vaiṣṇava Koh plate, CII III, p. 114, line 13 and O. v. Hinüber, “Behind the Scene: The Struggle of Political Groups for Influence as Reflected in Inscriptions,” *IJJ* 56 (2013), pp. 365–379 on these formulas, and on Brahmin vocabulary in Buddhist donations *IJJ* 47

veneration the Buddha, and lastly for various necessities for the monastic community. Although the wording varies in details, the aims of the first Bagh plate are the same. This is not entirely clear from V.V. Mirashi's translation, in which *bhagavato buddhāya* "for Lord Buddha" is left out.³⁴

The recipients of the gift seem to be the Buddha and the community of monks. Both are mentioned in the dative, the case usually used to mark the recipient, such as *asmai brāhmaṇaśaṣṭhisvāmine* in Subandhu's Barwani grant and elsewhere. Both Buddhist donations of King Subandhu are given as an *agrahāra* or *āgrahārika* "rent-free donation,"³⁵ while the Brahmana Śaṣṭhisvāmin receives a *brahmadeya*.

As usual, it is said at the end that the grant should not be violated by "our subordinates nor by other governors of a district" (*asmadīyair anyaviśayapatibhiś ca*, line 8). The phrasing *vyāpāro na kāryya* "it should not be the business of ..." is an unusual wording among the frequent warnings that nobody should obstruct the donation. The use of *asmadīya* to designate the officials of a king is confirmed by grants from Valkhā preserved in the Bagh hoard. The blissful inconsistency prevailing in the chancellery of the rulers of Bagh allows easily determining the meaning of the various expressions used at the beginning, when officials are addressed or at the end when their consent is demanded. Here "our" officials is expressed in various ways by *asmadīya* (*sarvvair eva-asmadīyair anumantavyam*, Bhulūṇḍa, no. V, line 7, p. 11 "all our [officials]") which is equivalent to *asmatsantaka* "our" (*samājñāpayati sarvvān eva-asmatsantakān āyuktakān*, Bhulūṇḍa, no. III, line 1 foll., p. 6 "all employees belonging to us")³⁶ or *asmatpakṣīya* (*sarvvair eva-asmatpakṣīyaiḥ samanumantavyam*, Bhulūṇḍa, no. IV, line 9, p. 9 "all those on our side"). Only the ruler Bhaṭṭāraka has *sva* (*svān āyuktakān ... bodhayati*, Bhaṭṭāraka, no. XXVI, line 3, p. 56, "notifies his employees").³⁷ Therefore it is unlikely that "our and other *viśayapatīs*" is meant.

Consequently, Subandhu as a *mahārāja* seems to consider himself as only a *viśayapati* "ruler (or governor) of a district",³⁸ because he addresses "other *viśayapatīs*" when he admonishes his counterparts not to obstruct the use of his grants to Buddhist institutions, which points to a subordinate rather than an independent petty ruler in spite of the absence of any reference to a superior authority in all three grants.

(2004), pp. 314 foll. = *Kleine Schriften*, Wiesbaden 2009, pp. 1065 foll.

^{34.} This was pointed out by G. Schopen, "The Buddha as an Owner of Property and Permanent Resident in Medieval Indian Monasteries," 1990, in: *Bones Stones and Buddhist Monks*, Honolulu, 1997, pp. 258–289, particularly p. 261 with note 15. Cf. also L.N. Owen, "Constructing another Perspective for Ajaṇṭā's Fifth-Century Excavations," *JIAS* 24 (2001), pp. 27–59, particularly p. 46. Unfortunately, G. Schopen's important warning went unheeded that a donation for repairs does not tell anything at all about the age of buildings and cannot be used as an argument for dating the Bagh caves, as done again in 2017 by W. Spink: *Ajaṇṭā*, as note 4 above, p. 11.

^{35.} U.N. Ghoshal: *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*, Second Edition revised by S.K. Mitra, Calcutta, 1972, p. 386. It is not clear whether or not the meaning of the two words is really identical as generally assumed.

^{36.} The word *satka* can be used as a suffix to express a genitive relation in compounds according to F. Kielhorn, *EI* 1 (1892), p. 164. The same is most likely true in compounds such as *mahattara-dāsaka-satka-kṣetram* "the field of the Mahattara Dāsaka" occurring in Maitraka donations, cf. the material collected in M. Njammasch: *Bauern*, as in note 26 above, p. 34, 76. In the light of F. Kielhorn's observation, the conclusions drawn from the use of *satka* by M. Njammasch need revision.

^{37.} The numbers refer to K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari, as in note 21 above.

^{38.} P.V. Kane, *Dharmaśāstra*, as in note 12 above, Vol. III, p. 1004.

The end of the document is marked by a symbol followed by the name and title of the messenger.

The last line contains the date. Only the month and the day can be read, although the last character in *āṣa(ḍha)* is not beyond doubt. It is, however, impossible to figure out the year. The word *saṃ + (tsa)ra* can be recognized followed by very faint traces of what might have been the original text of the date written by a scribe on the copper-plate before it was incised. The engraver, however, failed to execute the figures. Therefore, this inscription shares the fate of the first Bagh plate of Subandhu, which also lost its date, because the end of the last lines is broken off. Consequently, the year 167 in Subandhu's Barwani stone inscription remains the only date known of this king which may be AD 417 or 486/7 depending on whether the Kalacuri or the Gupta era is considered. However, there is no way to determine with certainty, which era is used.³⁹ The first date places Subandhu in the period of transition from Candraguta II (ca. 376–415) and Kumāragupta I (ca. 415–447), the second in the troubled times at the end of Budhagupta's reign (ca. 477–488), when Mahārāja Suraśmicandra was the Gupta viceroy in the territory between Gaṅgā and Narmadā and consequently should have been the immediate superior to the Viśayapati Mahārāja Subandhu.⁴⁰

Another point of uncertainty is how the monasteries mentioned in the plates relate to the Bagh caves. As long as there was only one plate, it would appear obvious to assume that the *vihāra* established by Dattaṭaka was identical with Cave II, where the copper-plate was found. Now there is a second monastery established by Ajitasena in Yakṣadāsānaka. The plate was found on top of the same cave. If this plate, too, should refer to one of the Bagh caves, the old name of Bagh was Yakṣadāsānaka and one of the caves was excavated by Ajitasena. As neither plate, however, seems to speak of a cave (*layana / leṇa*)⁴¹ it is likewise not impossible to conceive that neither refers to the Bagh caves and that these are the remnants of an archive of donations made to various monasteries in the area kept in or near Cave II, of which only two copper-plates survive by chance. At any rate the good relations of King Subandhu to the Buddhists in this area are underlined by the second Bagh plate.

³⁹ V.V. Mirashi, as in note 2 above, p. XL and p. 17 foll., prefers a Kalacuri in contrast to a Gupta reckoning, which seems to be almost generally assumed now, cf. H.T. Bakker: *The Vākāṭakas. An Essay in Hindu Iconology*, (Gonda Indological Studies, Volume V), Groningen, 1997 [rev.: H. v. Stietencron, *OLZ* 94 (1999), columns 366–374; G. Michell, *BSOAS* 63 (2000), pp. 127f.; R.L. Brown, *JAOS* 121 (2001), pp. 664–667; A. Malinar, *WZKS* 49 (2006), pp. 260–262], p. 38, note 131, and p. 50.

⁴⁰ The dates of the Gupta rulers follow M. Willis, "Later Gupta History: Inscriptions, Coins and Historical Ideology," *JRAS* 3 (2005), pp. 131–150; on Suraśmicandra see H. Bakker: *Monuments of Hope, Gloom, and Glory in the Age of the Hunnic Wars. 50 Years that changed India (484-534)*, 24th J. Gonda Lecture 2016, Amsterdam, 2017, p. 9 with note 19.

⁴¹ Because of the form *kāritaka* in *ajitasena-kāritaka-vihāra* besides *paribhuktaka* (also used in the Barwani grant) in Subandhu's second Bagh plate, it is certain that V.V. Mirashi's segmentation must be changed from *dattaṭaka-kārita-kalāyana-vihāra* to *dattaṭaka-kāritaka-l(ā)yana-vihāra*. Now, it is pointed out in CII IV.1, p. 20 note 4 that the *-ā-* of *lāyana* is, though hardly visible, still beyond doubt. If so, the name of the monastery would be Lāyana. However, it seems also possible that the *-ā-*, if really written, might be an error, which should be corrected to *layana* "cave." A *layana-vihāra* "cave monastery" would almost certainly refer to the cave, where the copper-plate was found.

Fig. 1. Bagh Copper-Plate II of King Subandhu.

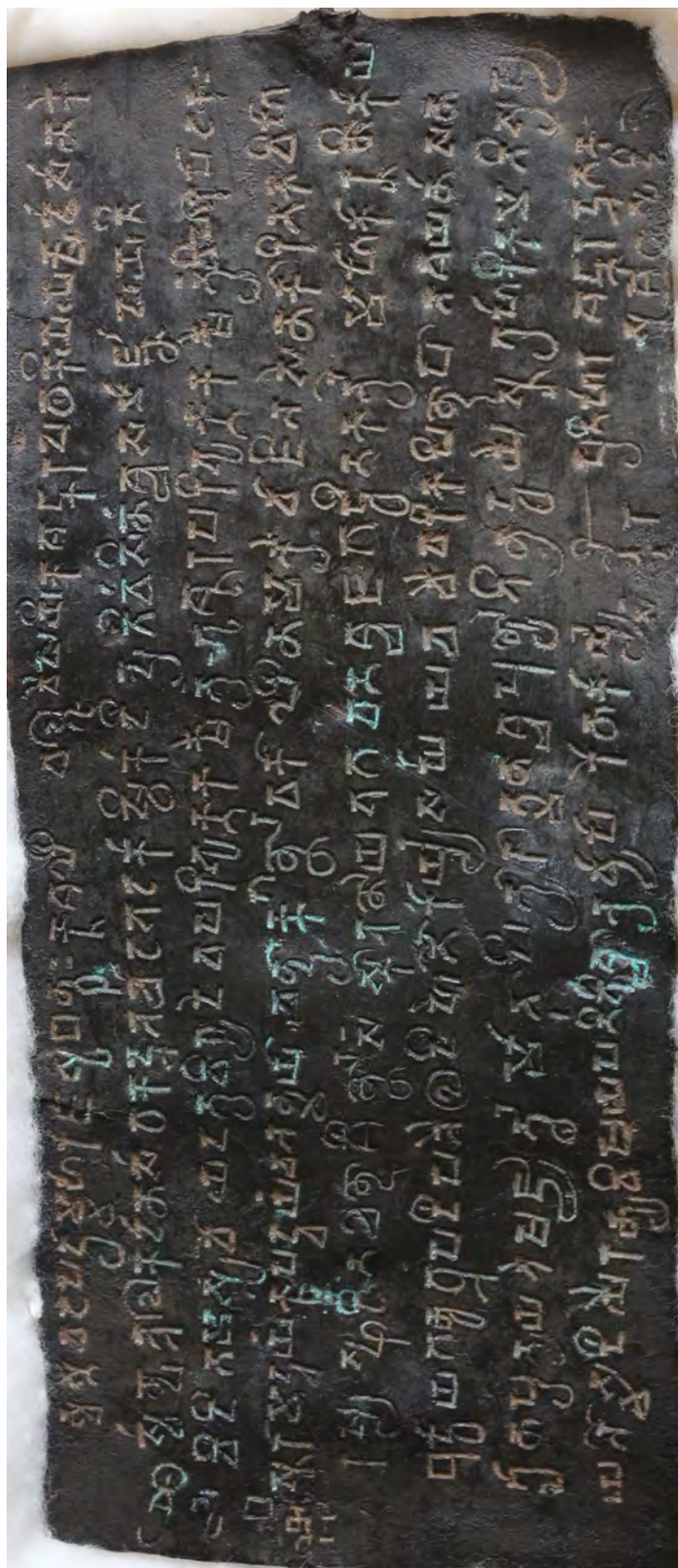


Fig. 2. "tisṛṣya"



Fig. 3. "kartre"



Fig. 4. "bhivṛddhaye"

